Spend Some Time Outside In Dallas County!
By Mike Wallace, Director

It’s a great time to be outside. Fall is one of the best times of the year to be outside enjoying everything that is around you. Dallas County is fortunate to have many outdoor recreation opportunities within a few minutes of where we live. In the Fall there are still plenty of warm and even hot days to take advantage of.

For example: ride a bike on the Raccoon River Valley Trail (RRVT) or the High Trestle Trail. As the leaves turn colors later in the season one of the best ways to get up close is by being on the trails. The view of the Des Moines River Valley from the High Trestle Trail is hard to beat. There are also many scenic areas along the RRVT as well. Have you become a “Looper” yet? Have you ridden the 72 mile “Loop” of the RRVT? There’s lots of scenery to view along the way and the unique small towns and the amenities they offer are fun to see and use. My wife and I just recently rode the “Loop” of the RRVT. It was fun and we can now say with pride that we rode the “Loop”. Biking is an activity that can be done during most of the autumn season and with our trails in Dallas County being some of the best in the nation; it is an activity that many can enjoy.

Our environmental education staff is very busy this time of year with school field trips and outdoor programs for the general public. Check our web site and calendar of events listed in this newsletter for a variety of interesting programs to attend.
On your own, you can make use of our river access ramps for canoeing. Canoeing the North Raccoon River from our new boat ramp north of Dawson downstream to the Perry boat ramp is a leisurely and scenic float that will occupy a good part of an afternoon. The new boat ramp north of Dawson has become a very popular access point. On the Middle/South Raccoon River the boat ramp at the Redfield dam is one of the most popular. Downstream from there is a newly renovated boat access area at the Pleasant Valley Wildlife Area. Again, this distance provides a good afternoon on the river.

As you do a float on the river this fall you will find that this season is also great for fishing. Whether you’re fishing in our rivers or utilizing some of the ponds and lakes we have, you will be pleasantly surprised at the success that is found when fishing in the fall.

Fall is also the time of year when many participate in various hunting activities. Dallas County provides many areas to hunt pheasant, quail, doves, ducks, geese and deer. One of the newer areas in Dallas County that is open to hunting is the 300 acre addition to the Voas Nature Area. This area north of the existing Voas Nature Area was created as a “wetland bank”. It has several wetlands established and has a large tract of prairie established as well. This area is good for pheasant, and waterfowl. The wetland bank area is an area in which only non toxic ammunition is allowed. No lead is allowed on this area for any type of hunting.

There is a section of the Voas Nature Area that has been set aside as a youth hunting area. This area can be used only by youth accompanied by adults. Only the youth are allowed to carry a gun. This area is open to those that make reservations with our office and a permit is needed to hunt on this section. There is no cost to do this but we do control the number of people on the site at one time. Contact our office for more information on using our youth hunting area.

Among other things, I think fall camping is one of the favorite things I used to do as a kid. The weather is still nice during the day and the evenings cool down just enough to look forward to a campfire. If you have not been to Sportsman Park east of Dawson lately you will be surprised at what you will find. We have a modern campground with a shower building. We also have two “Camping Cabins” which sleep five and are available year around. They have air conditioning, heat and their own shower and restroom within the cabin. Sportsman Park also has a very nice enclosed lodge that is heated and air conditioned. This facility would also be great to use in the fall. It can hold a group of 120. Just call our office at 515-465-3577 to get more information and to make reservations.
Dodder
By Justin Smith, Deputy Director/Biologist

No, someone did not toss a pile of spaghetti on that prairie at Voas Nature Area, though that might be what it looks like. That crazy looking mess of orange string is actually a parasitic plant called “Dodder” (Cuscuta sp.) While it is related to the Morning Glory plants, it is actually quite unique in the fact that it lacks chlorophyll (the substance that makes plants green), and is therefore unable to photosynthesize and create its own energy.

Dodder is a parasitic plant, which means that it lives off of other plants. In fact, it cannot live on its own. When a Dodder seed germinates from the ground, the newly emerged seedling can only live for approximately ten days by itself. If it fails to find a host plant within ten days the Dodder plant will die.

Once the Dodder seedling finds a host plant, it twines itself around the plant’s stem. Dodder always twines in a counter clockwise direction. The Dodder then loses its connection with the ground and is completely dependent upon the host plant for survival.

The Dodder extracts nutrients from its host through tiny appendages found on its stem called “haustoria”. As the Dodder twines around the host plant the haustoria are pressed up against the stem of the host plant, where they then push their way into the stem of the host plant. Through the haustoria, Dodder can pull the nutrients it needs to survive from the host plant. Dodder rarely kills the host plant, although it may stunt its growth and reduce flowering. – Continued on pg 15
Iowa’s Newest Coup  
By Scott Doescher, Natural Resource Manager

As the summer days start to get shorter many of you may begin to feel like the best days of the year are starting to pass. For me, it is quite the opposite. I welcome the cooler temperatures the shorter days bring and I know some of the best adventures of the year are just around the corner. I spend a lot of time fishing in the fall. As the daylight hours shorten, it tells the fish it’s time to put on the feedbag and stack on some weight before the long months of winter get here. That can make for some of the best action of the year with fish biting aggressively. More recently though, I have taken up another pastime (like I needed one!) that I look forward to as much as anything the fall season has to offer. I am officially a dove hunting addict. Now it’s not as if I am hitting the street corners late at night looking to buy a couple boxes of 20 gauge low brass #7 1/2’s from some seedy character in a trench coat. However, I will admit that the simple thought of a mourning dove’s flute-like call and whistling wings over head does make my trigger finger twitch all but uncontrollably in a manner that can only be described as withdrawal symptoms.

As the natural resource manager for Dallas County, when it comes to hunting, I am responsible for planting food plots to help increase the recreational opportunities in our public hunting areas. In the past couple years we have switched gears somewhat in our food plot strategies to accommodate the new dove season that runs from the first day in September until November 9. The better shooting in my opinion usually begins in the first part of September as the birds migrate south ahead of the cooler temperatures.

Dove hunting can provide some fast action and shooting that will challenge even the best of wing shots. With a daily bag limit of 15 and a possession limit of 30 you should have no shortage of chances to burn some ammo. Just remember to always make sure to use non-toxic shot in the areas that require it and that your gun is “plugged” so that it will only hold a maximum of three shells. Please make sure you thoroughly read and follow all Iowa hunting regulations as well if you do decide to give our states new sport a try.

~ Continued on page 15
One of the many interesting aspects of preserving Dallas County history is researching and occasionally meeting prominent people from Dallas County and Central Iowa. I recently had the pleasure of meeting one of those individuals. Rex J. Harvey is an unassuming man with a very distinguished career as a decathlete and as an engineer with several patents to his credit.

Rex was born in Dexter in 1946 and spent his childhood in Redfield. His athletic ability was developed at an early age by the legendary coach Dean Roe. Rex helped his team win consecutive state track and field championships in 1963 and 1964. During his high school years he won many titles as a pole vaulter and was a member of several relay teams.

Rex received a scholarship for track and field from Iowa State University. While at Iowa State he received four invitations to U.S. NCAA Division I Championships for track and field. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from Iowa State and later a Master of Science Degree in systems management from the University of Southern California. His degrees prepared him for his very accomplished engineering career.

Harvey never stopped competing as a decathlete after his college years. He represented the USA in six international track and field teams competing in Italy, Brazil, Sweden and the middle east, and in decathlon team competition with the Soviet Union and Canada. In 1976 he finished 13th as an Olympic Trials finalist in the decathlon.

At one time, Rex won 13 straight national decathlon championships. He also holds several pentathlon championships as well as other national championships in the pole vault, relays and other events.

He won several World Association of Veteran Athletes (WAVA) world championships including the decathlon in 1989 and 1991, where he set a WAVA world record in M45 that still stands. He won the World Masters Athletics Championships pole vault in Japan in 1993 and was a member of the world championship 4 x 100 and 4 x 400 relays in 1991.

On June 20, 1982 he set another record for the Men’s Decathlon for the 30-39 year old age group. He followed that in 1991 with another record for the Men’s Decathlon for the 40-49 year old age group. All of these accomplishments made him the USATF outstanding male masters combined-events athlete of the year in 1989, 1991, and 1996. In 2000 he was inducted into the USATF Masters Hall of Fame.

These are just some of his achievements. In 1989, he collaborated with several others to develop tables for grading athletic performances based on sex and age. In 1994 and 2004 he again collaborated to release an improved set of age-graded tables.

He has served as an information technology coordinator and been vice president of the World Masters Athletics. In 2007 he was elected to the Master’s Committee of the International Association of Athletics Federations. He lost the election for World Master Athletics President by a one vote shocker in the most recent election.
Wild Friends of DCCB You Should Get to Know

By Chris Adkins, Environmental Education Coordinator/Naturalist

Dallas County Conservation’s Environmental Education program is unique, because of our Wild Friends. High School youth in our county are blessed with an opportunity to call the largest wild place in the lower 48 states, the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, SBW, their Nature Center, because of DCCB’s Wild Friends. Get to know them... . . .

Pictured here is Momma Moose, also known as Connie Saylor-Johnson. Twenty years ago, at the age of 52, Connie's career took a leap of faith to the wilds, and DCCB followed her. Connie’s 30 years of teaching English and Spanish to Iowa’s high school youth, and her work as a consultant for the Iowa Department of Education took a hard turn to the west as she pulled up stakes and headed for the SBW. She began a second career, more of an avocation than a vocation, as she became a Wilderness Ranger for the United States Forest Service. In this capacity, Connie forged a one of a kind opportunity for Iowa high school youth to explore wilderness and examine the role of wildness in their lives. For 20 years she has invited over 200 youth from our place to share a trail with her, work as a volunteer in the USFS system, and experience 4.5 million acres of wilds. Connie is a DCCB Wild Friend.

My wife and daughters, then 3 and 6, visited Connie during her first summer in the SBW. It was there around a fire, miles up a trail, that we hatched this scheme of bringing Iowa high school youth to the wilds. For the first 10 years, my partner on these journeys was my wife, Jerri, pictured here with our daughters, on the first SBW trek. Jerri’s annual family vacation for 10 years was a trek to the SBW, spent shepherding a herd of high school trekkers up the trail. The seeds of these trek’s youth still grow, nourished in the wilds due to her. Jerri is a DCCB Wild Friend.

A third Wild Friend in this DCCB story is Owen Stump. Three summers ago, Owen answered the call of the wilds by participating in our Adult Wilderness Backpacking trek to the SBW. Hooked on the wilds, Owen has volunteered the past 2 summers as the trek’s co-leader. The singer/songwriter Arlo Guthrie once sang in his lyrics “you have to do to yourself first, that which you wish to do to others”. Owen has done this. In his growing wild, he has helped two treks of DCCB’s youth grow wild. Owen is a DCCB wild friend.

Thanks to all three of these WILD FRIENDS of DCCB!

If you would like to learn more about DCCB’s Wilderness Trek, please see the Calendar of Events page for information concerning a public program this fall. Opportunities await you for the 2014 High School Trek and the 2015 Adult Trek. You may be the next Wild Friend of DCCB.
SPORTSMAN PARK
BIKE TRAIL ~ LODGE
CABINS ~ CAMPING

515.465.3577
www.conservation.co.dallas.is.us

Raccoon River Valley Trail is only a block from the Cabins at Sportsman Park
(one mile east of Dawson)

DAN BRUBAKER ENTERPRISES
DRAINAGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
30 YEARS EXPERIENCE
515-436-7691

800-565-0029
515-238-7845 cell
DAN BRUBAKER OWNER
223 Main St. P.O. Box 132
Rippey, IA 50235

Quick Oil Co.
104 Willis Ave.
Perry, IA 50220
(800) 475-4994
(515) 465-4994
Fax: (515) 465-2405
www.quickoilco.com

Rod Gittins
President
rod@quickoilco.com

Refined Fuels • Lubricants • Propane
September

Fall Equinox Sunrise
Hanging Rock Park, Redfield
Sunday, September 22 ~ 6:30am
Equi- “equal” / Nox- “night”. This word implies a balance, night and day are equal. If you and I have ever communicated via e-mail, you would have received my signature sign off – the term – Koyannisgasti. This phrase is a Dina term, meaning “life out of balance”. Could joining us at Hanging Rock to watch the sunrise bring balance to your life? Gather with us on this Fall Equinox morning to learn about the site’s astronomical clock and its history. We’ll pause for a moment to consider just what time is and to celebrate in the sun’s appearance on the clock’s Fall Equinox rock. Perhaps the next morning’s sunrise will introduce a new sense of balance to your life. Registration is required for this free program.

NOTT* In My County! - Webwatch Program
(*)Naturalist On The Trail)
Do you know which snake is sunning itself on the warm trail? Which warblers are migrating through? Which flowers have the pollen that is making you sneeze? A Dallas County Naturalist will be on a section of the Raccoon River Valley Trail in both September and October, ready to talk with you about the nature you are seeing as you enjoy our longest park. Check our website for updates on dates, times and trail sections. No registration required for this free program.

Voas Museum Rock and Mineral Event
Voas Museum, near Minburn
Saturday, September 28 ~ 11am-3pm
Dallas County Conservation is very pleased to host a unique event at our Voas Earth Science Museum at the Voas Nature Area on Saturday, September 28, from 11am to 3pm. This one of a kind event will offer the public a chance to bring rocks and minerals in to be identified, swap rocks and minerals, learn more about Iowa geology, experience old fashioned gold panning, and a nature walk through the tremendous natural areas at the Voas Nature Area. The Voas Nature area is located west of Minburn, Iowa at 19286 Lexington Road. No registration required for the free event. For more information, contact Pete Malmberg at (515) 465-3577.

Outdoor Explore - Home School Series!
Cost: $2 per child
This series is designed for homeschooled kids ages 5 – 9 and their parents to interact with each other and the outdoor world. The programs are weather dependent. Dress to spend the majority of the time outdoors. Preregistration is required. Space is limited.

Monday September 30 ~ 10 – 11:30am
Forest Park, Perry
Westward Ho! Recreate a wagon train on our trails and museum

Monday, October 28 ~ 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Kuehn Conservation, Earlham
Star Light, Star Bright – Learn the stories and patterns of some starry constellations!

Monday, November 25 ~ 10:00 – 11:30 am
Kuehn Conservation, Earlham
Who Goes There? Learn how to make a variety of animal sounds.

Note: Parents are responsible for entertaining or otherwise occupying any older and younger siblings.

October

Salamander Crossing - Web Watch Program
Voas Nature Area, near Minburn
In mid October when the weather is cool and damp, hundreds of tiger salamanders migrate from the fields and ditches surrounding Voas back to their overwintering wetlands. If you’d like to witness this amazing yearly journey, add our website (www.conservation.co.dallas.ia.us) to your list of favorites and check it daily. The day we notice a lot of salamanders starting to move, we’ll post it on the website. That evening (which is when the greatest number of salamanders is likely to be seen) we’ll open the building for an evening salamander walk and talk. Dress in clothes that are warm and waterproof! No registration is required for this free program. If you do not have easy access to a computer, please contact our office for alternate arrangements.

If you are a group leader and your group is interested in attending one or more of these programs, please contact our office for alternate arrangements.
**October**

**Navigate the Wilds—Compass & GPS**  
**Sunday, October 13 ~ 1:00 pm - 5:30 pm**  
**Kuehn Conservation Area, Near Earlham**  
True freedom comes when you learn to navigate the wilds. When you learn to read a map, compass, and GPS you are prepared to go places where most humans will never allow their eyes to sweep the landscape, nor allow their feet to set on the soil. Learn the basics of reading a topographic map, pair that with a compass, and the ultimate in Hansel and Gretel “bread crumbs”, learn to use a hand-held GPS. You will put your skills together to hike the wilds of Kuehn. Bring water, a snack, bug repellant, and good hiking shoes. This program requires hiking off trails through prairies, woodlands, & hills.  
**Registration is required for this free program. Space is limited.**

**Gate Open at Glissman Conservation Area**  
**Sunday October 13 ~ 2:00 – 6:00 pm**  
**FREE  No preregistration necessary**  
This is your chance to drive through a normally locked gate and visit one of Dallas County Conservation’s hidden gems! With open spaces, a fishing lake, hiking trails and a rental lodge, Glissman has a lot to offer. Bring a picnic dinner or snacks and enjoy a fall day of hiking, wildlife watching, a lodge tour, and fishing. (A fishing license is required) Fishing poles will be available to those who need to borrow one for the day. A naturalist will be on hand to answer questions.  
**Registration is required for this free program.**

**Wilderness Trek Shared Story**  
**Wednesday, October 23 ~ 7:30– 8:30 pm**  
**Kuehn Conservation, Earlham**  
The Dallas County High School students who walked the trails of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness this summer as part of DCCB’s backpacking trek have a wild story to tell. We tout this trek as a “watershed experience”, meaning that the fluids of your thoughts will never again flow over the same cerebral topography following your wanderings in the wild. Join us to hear from these students just what lessons they learned from the wilds. How did this trek change them? If you are an adult, this is a chance for you to start dreaming of our 2015 Adult Trek. Students – set your sights on the summer of 2014. Perhaps you are just an individual that would like to share a wild dream or two. Come and let these trekkers share their wild story with you.  
**Registration is required for this free program.**

**November**

**Halloween Hike**  
**Tuesday, October 29 ~ 6:00 to 8:30pm**  
**Voas Nature Area, near Minburn**  
This year DCCB is moving our annual Halloween Hike back to the wilds of Voas Nature Area. Join us on the trails at Voas for a night of environmental education with a Halloween twist. As in past years, our goal is to use this holiday’s spookiness to help you come to know the wild stories of our place. Please consider including DCCB’s Halloween Hike in your celebration of this holiday.  
**Registration is required for this free program.**

**Survival Shelters**  
**Saturday November 2 ~ 10:00am - 12:30pm**  
**Kuehn Conservation Area, Earlham**  
You have found yourself lost in the wilds and the sun is setting, now what do you do? What you need first to survive in the wilds is a good shelter. In this program you will build a survival shelter in the wilds that would keep you warm even on the coldest of nights. Dress according to the weather, bring water, and be prepared to get dirty.  
**Registration is required for this free program.**

**Fire by Friction**  
**Sunday, November 17 ~ 2:00 to 4:00 pm**  
**Kuehn Conservation Area, Earlham**  
Cost- $5 per participant.  
On the surface, this program is about remembering the ancient skill of creating a fire with a bow drill. Participants will build their own bow drill kit and receive instruction towards mastering the technique of bowing up some char and setting your tinder bundle on fire. Truth be know, the lesson is not about this fire, but instead we wish to start a fire in your being that through these flames connects you to your place in a way unbeknownst to you at this point. Join us to explore the fire within.  
**Registration is required for this program.**

---

For more information or to register for any of our programs, contact:  
Dallas County Conservation Board  
14581 K Avenue ♦ Perry, Iowa  50220  
515-465-3577  
Office Hours: M-F 8am - 4:30pm  
conservation@co.dallas.ia.us  
www.conservation.co.dallas.ia.us
Whimsical Words of Wee-Ones
By Laura Zaugg, Assistant Youth Coordinator/Naturalist

“If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in.” ~ Rachel Carson

As an environmental educator I frequently think about this quote by Rachel Carson to remind myself that I play an important role in connecting children to the “joy, excitement and mystery” of their natural world. But sometimes I wonder if it isn’t the other way around. If an adult is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, joy and excitement he needs the companionship of a child. This is what the pint-size people I work with do for me every time I do a program. One of the many perks of working with kids is they keep you entertained with the funny things they say and do. It’s no secret that kids say and ask just about anything anywhere. These moments are too funny and precious to keep all to ourselves, so I thought I’d share some of my own, as well as other naturalists, whimsical words from wee-ones. Thank you to the naturalists across the state who have shared some of their students whimsical words.

Some of our funniest memorable moments
I was doing a library program and had some fake scat laying out & one of the kids asked what it was and I asked if any of them could tell me. One 4 year olds face turned red and I asked him if he knew what it was (I could tell by the look on his face that he knew). He was too embarrassed to say poop & his face got really red & he just held up his fingers, showing the #2. I said yep, you are right, that’s number 2! ~ Laura Zaugg, Dallas County Conservation

A preschooler once excitedly found an interesting bug and showed it to me. “Look what I found,” he proudly said. “Oh,” I replied, “a katydid.” “No!” he emphatically corrected me. “I did.” ~ Pam Holz, Washington County Conservation

I asked the kids how trees help animals? A kid answered, “they give my dog a place to pee.” ~ Jessica Lancial, Story County Conservation

After I mentioned to a class that I was speaking about Iowa animals, a kindergartner replies, I’ve been to Iowa. ~ Pam Holz, Washington County Conservation

During a preschool puppet play about the seasons, one of the puppets asked the kids if they knew of another season besides summer. A boy who was very excited for the naturalists to come that day, as he was wearing all camouflage, shouted, "I KNOW, I KNOW; HUNTING SEASON!" ~ Elizabeth Kling, Former naturalist for Des Moines County Conservation

~Continued on page 11
Whimsical Words of Wee-Ones ~ continued from page 10

Yesterday during a free play session in our woods along a dry creek bed, a youngster discovered "wild" clay! He must have only had experience with the "tame" kind before! ~ Sondra Cabell, Buchanan County Conservation

At a program on fireflies a 6 year old shared that birds probably don't eat them because they'd get burned. Connie Betts, Harrison County Conservation Board

I once had a preschooler ask me what the Opossum's first name was. As a matter of fact, it is Virginia. ~ Heather Gamm, Bremer County Conservation

I was teaching kindergarten or first grade kids about pollination. As I was showing them a large lily, I explained that pollen is a boy and an egg is the girl part of a flower. When the boy and girl get together and "kiss", a plant baby, called a seed, can be formed. At this point, one young girl piped up. "I know it doesn't happen that way with people. My mom would never kiss a boy." ~ Cindy Blobaum, Dallas County Conservation

Kindergarten field trip: at end, this wouldn’t have been possible if it wasn’t for all your teachers and parents and other chaperones willing to come and help out. What do you owe them? Answer: $6,000 ~ Pam Holz, Washington County Conservation

When I was pregnant I was doing a program with a group of pre-schoolers. I had a contraction and must have made a funny face because one young man looked at me and said "Billie Wille - do you have to poop?" ~ Billie Wille, Kossuth County Conservation

During a preK “Animals Prepare for Winter” program, I was explaining to the kids how animals like to get fatter during the winter, and how blubber helps keep them warm. One little girl raised her hand and stated, “I bet Mrs. Gabrielle never gets cold!” ~ Jessica Lancial, Story County Conservation

These pint-size comedians will share jokes they’ve heard or made up

After a 3rd grade field trip which included wild edibles, on a thank you note: “What did the onion say to the dandelion? I taste better than you.” ~ Pam Holz, Washington County Conservation

“What did one dandelion say to the other dandelion? Take me to your weeder!” Adel Desoto Minburn 3rd Grader ~ Laura Zaugg, Dallas County Conservation

Some whimsical words come in their thank you notes

“Thanks for teaching me how to whistle with the acorn. My parents hated it because it was so loud. Now I have TWO!” ~ Laura Zaugg, Dallas County Conservation

Thank you note— “I loved digging into owl throw up. Thank you”

Every naturalist hears this now and again and it’s one of my favorites

I have had kids tell me it is the best day of their life. ~ Angie Auel, Buchanan County Conservation

I hope you have enjoyed these memorable moments as much as we have. As the summer season winds down, I look forward to a whole new season filled with kids saying the darnedest things.
Early this summer, I attended a training session at the DNR Forestry building in Ames. Throughout the two days of meetings, I became infamous for my repeated use of a five word phrase. Every time we (mostly naturalists and educators from Iowa universities) were to break into small groups and work on an assignment, I would pipe up and ask “Can my group work outside?” Thankfully, the answer was always yes.

During one of the assignments, our small groups were to review the lesson plans that related to how to conduct outdoor investigations. The group started flipping through the manuals and making comments when a naturalist from another group headed over. “Hey, guys. Do any of you know what this is?”

In her hand she held a tiny cream colored dot. It was a bit smaller than a seed bead, but had no hole. “We found it under the oak tree where we are meeting. (My group wasn’t the only one that went outside.) If you watch it, after a bit it jumps, a lot like a Mexican Jumping Bean. We can’t see a mouth or legs.”

Forget reviewing the lesson plans - how could we resist participating in a true outdoor investigation? Several of us headed over. Soon we were kneeling along the edge of the road looking for jumping dots. We found thousands! With a bit of experimenting, we discovered that they jumped more when exposed to sunlight. They were only under the white oak tree, not the neighboring evergreens. I went in to ask for a microscope, and brought back a forestry staff member instead. In the meantime, the other investigators had discovered the tree leaves were covered with galls, tiny bumps that looked suspiciously similar to our jumping dots. The forester looked at them, shook his head, and went back inside. Meanwhile we checked out the other oak trees (no luck) and surmised that the jumping was caused by an active insect larva or pupa inside.

Within minutes, the forester came back. He had done a quick Google search and discovered we were witnessing a Jumping Oak Gall – the larval form of a tiny, stingless wasp. The larva feeds on the leaf tissue in the gall. When it falls off the leaf, it “jumps” to get to a protected place where it can overwinter as a pupa. In the spring, the adult wasp will emerge to mate and lay eggs on new white oak leaves, starting the cycle once again. If you Google, you can even see a video of this!

~ Continued on page 13
I put an oak leaf full of galls in an empty peanut butter jar and took it back to the office with me. The next morning, before everyone else arrived or my computer was turned on, I heard a noise that sounded a lot like popcorn popping. After a bit of looking around, I discovered it was the jumping oak galls in the jar. They kept at it for over a week!

What is my take-away from all this? The training I attended was fine. I was happy to go, glad to connect with other like-minded individuals, and feel more informed about certain programs I offer. But the jumping oak gall experience is what I really remember. I didn’t need a lesson plan to investigate – just the opportunity to be outside, supportive friends, and a willingness to search and ask questions. I encourage you to do the same – go outside with a group and see what you can find!
Thank You

Donations
Thank You!
We appreciate your support!

Raccoon River Valley Trail
Richard Giudici
Sharon Wilson
Tom Pfitzenmaier
George & Sue Frampton

Forest Park Museum
Everett Randall

ALWAYS THERE FOR UNEXPECTED EMERGENCIES
SHORT DRIVE. SHORT WAIT.

With over twenty-five specialty providers and our
dedicated team of doctors & nurses available
twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, you can
be sure that Dallas County Hospital is committed to
bringing you specialized care close to home.

You have a choice for your healthcare,
we hope you choose Dallas County Hospital.

Dallas County Hospital
610 10th Street • Perry, IA 50220 • (515) 465-3547
www.dallascohospital.org
Dodder ~ continued from pg 3

It’s very difficult to distinguish between the many species of Dodder. Some species of Dodder are host specific, but many will grow on several different types of plants. The Dodder I found growing at the Voas Nature Area was parasitizing both Maximillian Sunflowers and a Goldenrod Species.

Dodder does not have leaves, but does have tiny bell-shaped white flowers which bloom from June to October. After the flowers are gone, small fruits begin to grow on the plant. These fruits are 1/8 inch wide and each one contains from 1 to 4 seeds. The skin on the fruit is very thin and easily breaks open spilling the seeds to start a new generation of plants.

White Tailed Deer have been reported to eat Dodder. I would assume that other herbivores and insects also dine on the plant or we would be overrun by Dodder. While Dodder may be detrimental to some desirable plants, it can also have a positive effect. Dodder may actually help other plants by controlling the growth of some fast spreading plants such as English Ivy.

Iowa’s Newest Coup ~ continued from pg 4

Listed below is what I would refer to as some of the dove hunting basics. Check out the info and see if this is a sport you might want to consider adding to your list of fall activities. From my own experience, it is a season I have no intentions of ever missing.

**Shotguns**
Virtually any shotgun will suffice for doves. Larger-bore guns such as the 12 gauge offer more pellets and thus increase your odds of hitting your target, but smaller-statured and less experienced shooters may want to use something smaller, like a 20 gauge. Preferred shot sizes are 7 ½, 8, and 9. Lead shot is legal in many places, but if you’re hunting on public land be sure to determine whether nontoxic shot (steel or other alternatives to lead) is required on the area you’ll be dove hunting.

**Eye and Ear Protection**
It’s always a good idea to wear safety/shooting glasses if you don’t already wear glasses. Glasses can help prevent stray gunpowder or other debris from the outdoors getting in your eyes during hunting, as well as afford you protection in the unlikely event of a firearm mechanical failure. Similarly, it is wise to wear earplugs or noise-reducing earmuffs to protect your hearing. This is especially true for repeated shooting activities, such as dove hunting.

**Clothing & Boots**
The type of clothing and shoes you need for dove season really depends on the type of terrain and field conditions where you will be hunting. If the area is mowed (all or in strips), you can wear lighter clothing. In warmer conditions even a t-shirt and shorts will work just fine, but if you’ll be walking through tall weeds or crops or hunting during cooler morning conditions you may want to consider a heavier alternative. You don’t have to invest in expensive camouflage, although it can help you hide from birds as they’re approaching the field or area you’re hunting.

Drab green, tan, or brown clothing can suffice just fine, but if the weather is hot, light-colored and light-woven fabrics are recommended for your comfort. Some hunters wear tennis shoes or casual shoes while dove hunting, but most prefer boots of some kind for ankle protection while walking on uneven ground.

**Preparing to Hunt**
Many dove hunters like to "warm up" for dove season by shooting some trap, skeet, or sporting clays. There are many shooting clubs and commercial shooting ranges that offer these services or you can buy a hand thrower or ground-mounted thrower for launching clay targets. This type of practice is especially helpful for learning to lead moving targets and to follow-through with each shot—both essential skills for successful dove hunters.

**Scott’s Other Necessities**
I also highly recommend bringing along some good bug spray as the insects can be a pest this time of year especially when you are trying to keep still to incoming birds. I would also never hit the field without something comfortable to sit on. A cheap folding lawn chair works GREAT! The ones that come in a bag can easily be carried over your shoulder. The same goes for a cold bottle of Gatorade or whatever you prefer to stay hydrated, a candy bar or your preference of snacks, and a bucket or bag to pick up empty shells, trash and of course all the birds you will have to haul home!

Just remember; always leave things better than you found them and that you may possibly be setting the example for others hunting with you or possibly the next group to hit the field. Hunting is a privilege and the definition of ethics is doing the right thing even when nobody is looking. Shoot straight and be safe!
No qualified individual with a disability will be excluded on the basis of a disability from participation in meetings, hearings, programs, activities or services conducted by the Dallas County Conservation Board. To request information in an alternative format or request an accommodation to participate in a meeting, hearing, program, activity or service, contact the Dallas County Conservation Board, Forest Park, 14581 K Avenue, Perry, Iowa, 50220, (515) 465-3577